Facts For the People.

BY S. H. BASHOR.

NUMBER FOUR.

From "time immemorial" the regulation "Dunkard" sermon invariably embraced a defense of the distinctive ordinances of the church. It was a common saying that no difference what the text the sermon of the preacher invariably ended with an extended plea for ceremonial observance. Many had become wearied, not of the doctrine but of its incessant repetition. The feeling largely prevailed among Progressives that insistance upon the moral code of the Bible had been too much neglected, and there was a demand for "broader preaching." Our younger and more ambitious brethren launched out in this new field and found their auditors immensely pleased with the jingle of the tune. A large body of people composed of brethren's children and others raised up under similar influence were waiting for this new order of things, and at once espoused the cause were baptized and entered the church. Moving among this class the inexperienced preacher was imbued with the idea that, what is commonly known as doctrinal preaching, especially as it embraces a defense of ordinances and ceremonies, was entirely uncalled for and out of place. So it happened that many churches were organized and Pastors installed without a singular sermon in explanation of our ceremonial code being preached. Many people pleased with the dash and spirit of the new church entered its fold with little inquiry, and almost absolutely no intelligent idea of the nature of its doctrinal claims. But this state of things bore its fruits in a shorter time than the thoughtful among us expected. Inside of three years we had grown from a mere handful of "expelled members" into a large body of respectable worshippers. Other denominations who at first gave us sympathy, saw their members and members children seeking homes with the new church, and withdrew their support. From a feeling of sympathy at first our encroachments upon their numbers, tinged them with the color of suspicion and opposition, at last. Just here began, what the writer and others had so long feared, the tug of war for substantial existence. Our membership had been won without adequate doctrinal teaching, and when the Dunkards attacked the moral character of our preachers, and other denominations questioned the correctness of our ceremonials, the class of preachers above refered to and their untaught members were next to panic stricken. In one locality the single immersionist attacked us and the poor little uninformed and doctrinally untaught Progressive preacher was ready to surrender at once. He was not ready to give all his past practice the lie by administering single immersion himself, but in his extremity would compromise with his enemy by accepting his singly immersed subjects without "re-baptizing" them. Others heard much "Campaign thunder" upon the superficial inspiring plea of unlimited and unrestricted open communion, and with more zeal than knowledge and discrection surrendered at once. Following this were attacks upon the supper and the same class of preachers weakened, and had they dared would have yielded at once, without disputation or investigation. As a sort of compromise between their own conscience and religious neighbors the supper was advocated as a full meal with the private understanding that "you shan't eat much of it." These and other things came up some in one locality and some in another, and for a while it looked as it no power on earth could hinder a wide spread disintegration. Each of these young preachers became so fully baptized with fear on the one particular point pestering the doctrinal security of his surroundings that nothing else could enter his mind. It became a sort of helpless impulse, and nothing could give relief but expression and advocacy of this new idea of compromise.

Private letter writing, and the pages of the Evangelist formed the "scape value" for all this murky and combustible material. All shades of belief were advocated and the less history and Bible the advocate knew the louder and longer his claims. So the example we had set in the old *Progressive Christian* was followed with industry and vigor. "Free rostrum" was the idea and we became as belligerant on doctrine as we ever were on tradition. We ceased fighting the enemy and pumeled each other, and for a time it was a question of life or death with the new organization. A few of us fearful of ultimate consequences lay the foundation for the evasion of the evils threatening us by private correspondence, and through the Ashland convention. We felt that we had made a mistake in not ceasing discussion when we first organized and were in a measure responsible for the controversies so frequently running through the EVANGELIST. Fortunately the majority of our younger brethren only needed a suggestion to investigate the full nature and character of our claims to set them right on all these subjects. This they have done and no stronger advocates of all the distinctive claims of the church can be found today than among their number. During the days of discussion the German Baptist defenders used the EVANGELIST as a missionary against us, and did it with considerable success, They had prophecied that very thing and with an exuberant of joy displayed the fact to the astonished gaze of their weak brother who just escaped this "awful Progressiveness" by the skin of his teeth. Many of our brethren disheartened and disgusted at the character of our paper, and protest after protest was made without avail. I would not have been the editor of the EVANGELIST during those days for a salary of $3,000, a year. We had among us a class of thoughtless correspondents, who thanked God for the privilege of discussion, who gloried in discussion, and who fairly gloated over the wondrous wisdom and logic and strength of the doctrinal product of their own pens. And it is safe to say no more insipid commonplace and uncritical jargon ever passed muster as doctrinal theology than the effusions spun by them for the guidance of the Progressive church. The deep things of God and the mighty things of theology was to them what others weighed and measured as the empty unsupported and undemonstrable assertions of the author. The claims of our doctrine have long ago been settled. The onslaught of learned opposers, and the most exquisite reasoning of the forensic orator with masses of history and denominational theology before him could not uproot or shake it. All our boys need do is read the history of the church, the controversies of the past, and become acquainted with all the evidences both historical and Biblical bearing upon the subject to see the useless nature of the task to discover new truth relative to correct ceremonial observance.

It we could stop the useless and often damageing controversies carried on through the EVANGELIST it would be of permanent value both to the church and the authors themselves. No single good thing has ever resulted from them. No new truth has been discovered. But honest seekers after truth have been misled, and warm friends of the church have been driven away and into other folds. The Ashland Convention did much to settle beyond dispute the relation a universal uncontradictory and unbending doctrinal code bears to our idea of a congregational form of church government. It was to call attention to these inaccuracies, that notes of warning were written. It was hoped that the good sense of our people would enter and call a halt, but it seems that the effort was not entirely a success, and one or more small reminders may be necessary to do what the pressure of public opinion has failed to establish. Controversy is sometimes necessary, but when it becomes chronic and is only indulged in at the expense of good taste, and as an element of satisfaction to a craving appetite for cheap notoriety, it is little less than abomnible. We want the EVANGELIST to represent our best minds, and strive after the conversion and saivation of the people. It should have and can have the unqualified support of the whole church. It should be sent to hundreds of homes as a Brethren missionary, and will be if it is made the organ of righteousness it should be. We will give it our best thoughts, our best efforts, and our individual support if objectionable features are removed. They can be, and all who love the church, its cause and success should contribute to this end. At first I had in mind several articles in this series, but owing to causes relating to my health and work this will be the last. I cannot regularly follow them up each week and do the preaching and visiting required in my work, but will from time to time, hand the editor such essays as time and health make it possible to write. This is an abrupt and in a measure unsatisfactory ending to the series, but the author begs indulgence for the causes above mentioned.

Self Government.

BY J. B. LAIR.

"Let your moderation be known unto all men," Phil. 4 : 5.

"The Gospel of Christ" was given man for the specific purpose of elevating him to a higher plane to a grander and nobler life, for the working out of his salvation by his own volition, and for his final salvation in the world to come, and if the Gospel does not do this it comes short of its purpose—the fault however not being on the part of the Gospel, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe," and bring themselves into relation with it. By studying the Scripture, I have come to the conclusion that salvation is strictly an individual matter, and individual self-government is a vital principal in working out salvation.

And while others have been writing about "church government, I have been thinking about self-government, and while I do not claim any new discovery in the case, I have come to the conclusion that first principles of government are self-government. No sane person will dispute the fact, that the persons who cannot govern themselves, are not the proper persons to govern others. The teacher who cannot govern himself commits an outrage when he undertakes to govern a school. The parents who do not first govern themselves, ought to have enough respect for their offsprings, not to try to govern them lest they too commit an outrage, and that on their own children. But worse still would it be for an elder to undertake to administer church government, before he had fully brought himself under proper restraint, and government. But still worse, if possible is it for a body of un (self) governed persons to sit in judgment, and administer government to one of their fellow brethren, who in all probability has not done worse than those who are sitting in judgment. It may be, that the one crime if crime, it is, is known while the other is not.

There is nothing more at variance with the word of truth and the Spirit of righteousness than for one erring man to sit in judgment upon the errors of another. Christ delineates on this subject, saying "Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye, or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull the mote out of thine eye, and behold a beam is in thine owe eye. Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye, and thou shalt see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye," Mat. 7 : 1, 6. Christ calls the one who would judge another a hypocrite, and if there is anything that God hates, above another, that is bad it certainly is a hypocrite. Then I make the point that God hates every one. I care not be he elder, deacon, or layman that would sit in judgment upon the errors or sins of his brother, so long as he himself erred or sinned, and John tells us that "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 1st Jno. 1 :8.

Now then it sums up this way, the man that would judge is a hypocrite, and shall be condemned himself, for the reason that he would condemn others instead of himself, for doing no worse than he has done. The man that would say that he can judge, for he has no sin, decieveth himself, and the truth is not in him. Here are unqualified scriptural assertions. There are no exceptions here to any one. Then who is to judge? The scripture makes its own answer, "Let a man examine himself." Take notice to the wording, let a man examine his brother, no, not his brother as the general rule is, but HIMSELF. Now I answer to the question "who shall judge?" Every body, every individual is to judge, and should do it, and every one has just one individual to judge, so you